

THE AMERICAN PROTECTIVE LEAGUE.



**A New but Powerful Race Organization
Whose Object is to Encourage Thrift—
The Saving of Money and the Purchase of
Tracts of Land for the Building of Negro
Towns and Cities—Its Plan, its Member-
ship, its Capital—Bruce Grit the Well Known
Newspaper Correspondent is made the
Secretary Tells the Story of its Remark-
able Growth—The Constitution and Plan
of Management.**

Present events, present circumstances and the aspect of the immediate future emphasize and demand that we, the colored people of the United States of America, close our eyes to past failures, place our minds and hearts upon our present duty as a race and as American citizens, and unite for action and results. For such purpose for forming a more mutual and national relationship among ourselves; for bringing about more just and humane treatment from others for helping to check and obliterate those cruel and barbarous practices that are incompatible with Christian civilization; for becoming interested in the building up and ownership of communities, cities, States, Territories, or any dependencies of this government; to form a more appreciative part of the government to which we are so loyal and subservient in time of peace, and for which we pledge our sacred lives in time of war; for helping to make the Declaration of Independence as sacred and as dear in reality as it is in name; for helping to make valid the last three amendments to the Constitution of the United States; for formulating means of self protection, and accordingly self preservation; for these and such other reasonable purposes as befit the dignity and patriotism of American citizens, we do hereby form ourselves into one compact body and adopt the following constitution:

ARTICLE I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be "The American Protective League." The above is a citation from the constitution of The American Protective League and sets forth clearly and distinctly its aims and objects. Founded March 16th, 1898, copyrighted in 1900, by Mr. Joseph W. Henderson, of Providence, R. I., and incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey in 1901. It has come to remain until the objects which called it into being, and which are so clearly defined in its declaration of principles, are all put into practical operation.

The American Protective League was organized for business, at Indianapolis, Ind., July 31, Aug. 1 and 2, 1900, and Jos. W. Henderson, its founder, was elected President.

It is a national organization of colored men, women and children. The entrance fee is only one penny per week, or 52 cents per year. If only one Negro in ten of our present Negro population contributed this small pittance per week, the result would be \$1,660 per day; \$10,000 per week, or \$520,000 per year. If all should do so, its daily income from this source alone would be \$16,600 per day, \$100,000 per week, or \$5,200,000 per year.

Since "the minutest thing is part of a magnitude," it will be seen at a glance that the possibilities of a penny when directed in right channels are amazing to contemplate.

The American Protective League has not "despised the day of small things," for it has already demonstrated in the most practicable way what can be accomplished with a penny when enough of them are gathered together for business purposes.

With a united organization composed of branch leagues scattered all over the country, and an aggregate membership of 100,000 of all sexes and ages, it has done what no Negro organization has ever done and with less noise and publicity. Its first business enterprise was the purchase of Rome, a townsite comprising 3,000, building lots in Hunterdon County, N. J., situate on a beautiful plateau 600 feet above the level of the sea, and the only County in the State of New Jersey that has not a single marsh or pool of stagnant water in it. It is ten miles wide, fifteen miles long, and is nearly level.

This is the great fruit district of New Jersey; the finest grazing land in the State, and the most healthful spot west of Colorado.

Near at hand are valuable cement deposits, and fire and brick clays are abundant.

Manufacturing establishments are contiguous on every side, and a creamery with a reputation second to none in the world is already in operation near the center of the town of Rome.

The American Protective League owns, in its own right, every foot of this land, and it proposes to found a model Negro town there with the stray pennies of colored men, women and children who have faith in Negro capacity for doing the things that white men are doing with less money and less experience.

The town of Rome is already laid out and Negro skilled artisans and mechanics, who must be members of the League, will build and beautify it.

It is a healthy agricultural district, situate about two miles from Pittstown, a Lehigh Valley R. R. Station. The community is a fruit growing, vegetable raising,

dairy district, and there's millions in it for the right kind of people who may locate there and build homes.

This property is valued at \$250,000 and the American Protective League bought and took possession of it on May 1st, 1901, and has already sold to its members on easy terms more than 500 lots valued respectively at \$100, \$80, \$65, and \$50 each and League stock at its incorporating headquarters, 224 Market street, Newark, N. J. The League's capital stock is \$125,000. The par value of this stock which is sold only to members of the League is \$5 per share. For a limited period only, and to encourage prospective purchasers, it will be sold for \$1 per share.

This is only a beginning of the work contemplated by this organization for its possibilities are almost countless and its resources are unlimited.

A little calculation will prove the truth of this assertion. That it is demonstrable no fair minded man will deny. It at once appeals to the common sense and public spirit of every Negro who has a cent's worth of interest in himself or his race.

What the League has already accomplished with the loyal support and encouragement of believing thousands who have rallied to its support in its effort to find a way out is sufficient answer to the critics and doubting thousands who haven't the time or the inclination to form a deliberate opinion of the feasibility and practicability of the plan, even if they knew how. But the American Protective League is not concerned about the views of the wise, and otherwise critics touching its plan. It is succeeding admirably well, and the plain people are contributing to its success in a way which shows that the plain people know a good thing when they see it.

The American Protective League offers cheaper rates of membership than any other Negro organization in the country—52 cents per year—no more no less. There are no sick or death benefits accruing from membership therein.

The only benefit to be derived from membership is, that in all communities to be built up with the money thus contributed to the support of the League, its members will be preferred in all employment and business enterprises set up and maintained by this annual tax and other moneys derived in a legitimate manner. The idea is best expressed in the word reciprocity.

On our properties in Rome, New Jersey, there is to be established a cannery, and a brick yard for the manufacture of vitrified brick. These industries will give employment to hundreds of Negroes. Connection is to be made with Lehigh Valley R. R., which is two miles distant from Rome, and the railroad will be constructed by Negro laborers, members of the League.

When workmen and their families settle in any community they must have the necessities of life.

The baker, butcher, shoemaker, grocer, druggist, clothier, etc., etc., are all necessary to the comfort and happiness of the sons of toil, as also of those who are not reduced to the necessity of toiling. Thus it will be seen that the town of Rome, N. J., will in no particular be different from other towns except that it will be populated by an industrious and thrifty class of Negroes, desirous of being independent and willing to pay a penny a week to secure true independence, which is the basis of real manhood and womanhood.

There are to be no drones at Rome, there won't be room for them. The time has come for the Negro to do something for himself. He has been too long eating bread earned by the sweat of the white man's brow and blowing about his advancement while being propped up by white men's dollars and sympathy.

It is up to him now to be a man, and to prove himself a man by supporting a race organization which offers him an opportunity to better his condition at the cheapest rates ever before offered by any of the many worthy race organizations throughout the country.

No sane man will for a moment deny that the Negro organized cannot raise \$5,200,000 in a year by this penny scheme. It can be done and it will be done.

How? Well, that is another story. The Prudential Life Insurance Company has a magnificent granite building in Newark, N. J., where our branch office is located, which occupies almost an entire block, which has been built and furnished by money collected in weekly sums of from 5 cents to 50 cents from the poorer classes of all races.

It has reduced the system of collecting these small sums to a positive science, and the plan works smoothly and successfully.

Organization, application, and action constitute three important elements of business success. Why may not Negroes of intelligence and the genius for organizing succeed as well as white men of intelligence, and the genius for organizing? The American Protective League has a system which has been carefully developed and

there will be no Alps in the solution of the problem it has set out to solve which it cannot cross. It is a well known fact that the people among us who support Negro churches and societies belong chiefly to that element denominated as the "common people;" they are the workmen and women of the race; the pillars of the churches and societies; the mainstays in every great emergency when a call for help issues at a grand rally for immediate and substantial help. They never hesitate or falter, and in some States they have been known to raise in one day, with special effort and urging, from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Does any body imagine that these good people will refuse to contribute one penny a week to an enterprise that offers material and substantial advantages to the living, while they get nothing but the promise of salvation hereafter for their fifty cents, or \$5 given to the church? Is it not true that a large number of our race are anxious to improve their material condition and get some of the world, or that part of it which has not been prevented by the white man? The Negro is very human and if there are any who do not possess public spirit and race interest enough to encourage with their moral and substantial support an organization like the American Protective League which has demonstrated its ability to do what it says can be done by doing it, they certainly need to be pitied.

The American Protective League proposes to build the town of Rome just as white men have built some of the most progressive towns in the East, and it has begun now, today, the foundation upon which to rear the structure which is to be a monument to Negro loyalty and which will demonstrate the self-redeeming qualities of the Negro who has an opportunity to prove what is in him.

\$100,000 worth of convertible improvement bonds with interest at 6 per cent., payable in gold on the first day of July of each year, redeemable on or before July 1st, 1915, based on 2,750 unsold lots and other land in Rome, N. J., duly authorized by the League July 1, 1901, have been issued and will be disposed of by its fiscal agent, a reputable broker and attorney of Newark, N. J., among investors in good real estate securities, who wish to realize on their investments.

A sinking fund is provided for by setting apart 50 per cent. of the net proceeds of the sale of lots and lands, and the bonds are convertible and will be exchanged at the Company's office for any unsold lots in Rome at or before July 1, 1902. This is business and it will appeal to every business man who understands business procedure.

The good faith and the honesty of the League is expressed in the provision "nominated in the bond," setting aside a sinking fund to secure present and prospective investors in its commercial paper from loss. Its common stock and the lots purchased from it by members is then secured from loss, and every dollar placed with it is backed by another dollar, and the laws of the State of New Jersey protect it. The American Protective League is what its name implies. Its mission is to do good; to help and protect black humanity; to direct its pennies into useful channels for the common good; to elevate the Negro from the condition of a peripatetic beggar, and to make him independent by making him see the possibilities that now lie hidden in the wasted pennies of a prodigal and heretofore happy-go-lucky element of the race.

The League invites correspondence from those who may be interested in its work toward the uplifting of the race, and respectfully requests the readers of this newspaper who may at any time visit Newark to call at its branch office and convince themselves that it is really doing business and means to succeed.

The headquarters and main offices of the League will be located at Providence, R. I., from whence will issue shortly its official organ, The New England Torchlight. Mr. Joseph W. Henderson is founder, and National President of the League, and J. E. Bruce is its National Secretary. Persons desiring employment as organizer and agents will communicate with the American Protective League, Providence, R. I., U. S. A., enclosing stamp for reply. No attention will be paid to communications not accompanied by stamps. We want good, reliable agents in all parts of the country, and will pay liberal commission to the right persons. Men, women and children can serve the League in this capacity and make money for themselves.

It would take all the space in the newspaper to explain fully the scope and aims of the League and the magnitude of its work. We believe that we have the solution of one end of the problem, and so believing we intend to solve it if it can be done by intelligent and conscientious application to the work before us. We have "biked our wagon to a star" and whenever you see that particular star look for our wagon.

BRUCE GRIT.

A Sacred Musicales.

The sacred musicales held at Mrs. Collins, 463 E street, southwest, was well attended Sunday evening. The programme consisted of a solo by Mr. Scott of Atlantic City, instrumental solo, Miss Mamie Collins, recitation by Miss Gertrude Dowling. Solo, Mr. Sabbs, march, Sousa, Miss Mand Dowling. Among those present were Mr. Lucius Thompson, Mrs. Dr. Collins, Prof. Jones, Rev. Philipps, D. D., and many others. Miss Louise Collins was Mistress of ceremonies.

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